

### REMARKS

The Official Action dated September 22, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, claims 4-8 and 11-14 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regard as the invention. As previously, claims 1-14 are presently pending in the instant application.

Initially, Applicants wish to acknowledge the Examiner's indication in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Office Action that claims 1-3, 9, 13 and 14 have been allowed over the prior art of record. Further, claims 4-8, 11 and 12 have been determined to be allowable over the prior art of record if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph set forth in the Office Action. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, each of claims 4-8, 11 and 12 have been amended in order to overcome the indefiniteness noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are now in proper formal condition for allowance as well.

With reference to paragraphs 1-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure as well as the disclosure as including minor informalities. Again, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, the informalities noted by the Examiner have been cured and consequently it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' Abstract and Specification are now in proper formal condition for allowance.

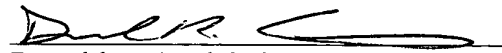
Referring now to paragraphs 5-11 of the Office Action, each of claims 4-8, 11 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, each of claims 4-8, 11 and 12 have been amended in order to clarify the indefiniteness noted by the Examiner in

each respective claim. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4-8, 11 and 12 are now in proper formal condition for allowance.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the objections and rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1-14 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald R. Studebaker  
Reg. No. 32,815

Nixon Peabody LLP  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street N.W.  
Suite 900  
Washington, D. C. 20004  
(202) 585-8000